THE New Republic

Domestic Tranquillity

By Prescription

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The White Goddess

Some Clues to a Literary Mystery

By ROBERT GRAVES

Do We Need Formosa? . . . . . *Nathaniel Peffer*

A World Without O's . . . . . *Gerald Weales*

Mary McCarthy's Memoirs . . . . . *Victor Lange*

An Editorial Appraisal of Mr. Stassen's Chances of Negotiating a "First-Step" Agreement

JUNE 24, 1957

25c

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Washington Wire

Fallout Flu

THE British medical journal, *The Lancet*, carries a communication from a scientist who thinks this new Asiatic influenza epidemic slowly making its way toward the US is a mutation of the old 'flu germ caused by H-bomb fallout. Fallout, it appears, can cause mutations in anything, human beings or germs. The new influenza strain, fortunately, is mild—not a killer. The trouble is that that was true of the strain that caused one of the most terrible global epidemics in modern times in 1918; it began gently and then suddenly for unexplained reasons became lethal.

Aliens to the North

AT THIS TIME last week we sat at a private party with a couple of broadcasters who confessed almost complete ignorance of the reason for the smashing Conservative Party victory in Canada, and its significance. Before the week was over they would be expected to go on the air and "interpret" it. Of course surprise elections are not too infrequent, like the Truman victory in 1948. But in this Canadian overturn where Liberals dropped from around 170 to 104 seats and Conservatives rose from about 51 to 110, there seemed to be no background of knowledge of Canadian affairs in the US press. It always amazes us, the indifference of the US to Canada. Had it been a European election the papers would have been full of it for weeks. Since it is only our best customer and the land closest to us physically and spiritually, we hardly heeded it. Can it be that there is actual rejection in this attitude? It goes beyond mere indifference. Are we trying, perhaps unconsciously, to shun knowing about a nation whose social legislation makes the Roosevelt New Deal look like a piker? Our conservatives are always spurning "European" alien philosophies, implying by inference somehow that the US and Canada stand against such things. They cannot bear the fact that these alien ideas are often Canadian as well—like government ownership of utilities, the family allowance plan and now the state health insurance. We have to pretend not only that the 600 million Red Chinese don't exist—but that the Canadians don't either.

Incidentally, the Canadian Gallup poll guessed wrong on the result; it was 3 to 4 percent off.

GOP to the Rescue?

IN CONGRESS our own guess is that Eisenhower will get most of his $3.6 billion request for foreign aid (which started off as a $4.4 billion budget figure but which he voluntarily trimmed). The big battle in Congress is going to come on another Administration measure — civil rights. We believe Eisenhower has exerted real pressure to get this through the House and that he deserves substantial credit for what now looks like passage there. But of course the big battle is in the Senate. It will be another showdown test of whether GOP conservatives will or will not aid Dixiecrats if it comes to a filibuster. It takes 64 votes to break a filibuster. Time and again in the past the GOP has quietly come to the aid of Dixie in the final test.

Trying to be realistic about the thing, our own guess is that the South will either make the pending civil rights bill meaningless by amendment or will shelve it by filibuster with tacit GOP support. This in spite of the fact that Paul Douglas (D, Ill.) is giving the civil rights bill the best leadership it has ever had. The point to remember is that this fight is never lost. It is the steady, persistent pressure on the South by courts, by Congress, by world opinion that is making it give ground. The change in a decade has been amazing. Nobody can doubt now the direction of the times.

On Again, Off Again

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S Gallup poll rating has dropped from 79 to 62 between January and June, a slide of 17 percent. In that period the President has been for his budget, against his budget, then for it again. In this period the President has retained Walter Robertson as Assistant Secretary of State —a fanatical opponent of trade with Red China—while recognizing the need for more trade between China and our allies. In that period, finally, the President has swung around on the natural gas bill. Originally he said he wanted two amendments included to safeguard the 22 million families who are captives of pipelines and whose annual gas bills will go up around $40 each, it is estimated, if federal control of producer prices is eliminated. The President's reversal here is extraordinary. In a letter to the gas bill sponsor, Rep. Oren Harris (D, Ark.), he said in effect, "Never mind my pro-consumer amendments, I'm for the gas bill anyway." He used the actual phrase which we found startling "[the amendments] do not represent *my fixed conclusions.*" More than any comment we have so far heard from the White House that seems to typify Eisenhower's queer, misty approach to domestic problems, no "fixed conclusions."

Notes

THE SUPREME COURT continues to give its breath-taking decisions, slapping down segregation, the FBI, the DuPont empire; in a period of listless status quo in domestic affairs it is not the White House, not Congress but the Supreme Court which is leaving its imprint on the times. . . . Maudlin efforts to make McCarthy a posthumous martyr by a proposed unanimous resolution expunging his 1954 censure from the Senate record have been quietly blocked by Margaret Chase Smith (R, Maine); she was willing to extend condolences to the family—but not to praise his activities. . . . There is a chance, though a slim one, that the McClellan Committee will look into improper activities of employers as well as labor; the Textile Workers Union has evidence of employer violence and espionage that it aches to put on the record. . . . Comment heard in the National Press Club: "Jim Hagerty got Ike up after his stomach ache faster than hospitals now get women up after childbirth!"; in the billion dollar stockmarket drop it was, significantly, oil shares that sank the most.

T.R.B.

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The New Republic

A JOURNAL OF OPINION

JUNE 24, 1957

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Correspondence

► *Eisenhower and God*

SIRS:

"POSITIVE Thinking on Pennsylvania Avenue" (*NR*, June 3) by Philip Roth is the most distasteful article I have ever read in *The New Republic*. To ridicule any man's approach to God is both cynical and smug.

Congressman Judd and Norman Vincent Peale may well feel bitter remorse for their part in the betrayal of a wife's confidence, the exploitation of which by Mr. Roth was nothing short of crass.

I cannot imagine why *NR* would publish such a low form of humor.

DOROTHY NELSON

Glenview, Illinois

" . . . in wretched taste"

IF YOU are interested in a comment from a Democrat who doesn't know much about religion and prayer, and who thinks that Mr. Eisenhower is a rather poor President, here goes: The

(*Continued on page 23*)

Russia's New Proposal

IF THE only agreement with the Russians our government will consider is one which guarantees a clear military advantage to us (and a disadvantage to the Russians), we are going to wait many a year more without agreement. Or if an East-West agreement on arms limitation necessitates each side's believing it has achieved absolute security, beyond which no further military development is possible—then too, agreement will be a long time coming. No security system is fool-proof, and only fools think it could be. Moreover, any conceivable agreement on slowing down or ending the nuclear arms race will require risk-taking by both sides. These are the two facts which must be kept in mind as we consider the latest Russian proposal for suspending nuclear weapons tests for three years and permitting the policing of the agreement by inspectors on Russian soil.

This latest Soviet offer has given the London arms talks a new tone of urgency and a new turn. But there have been other developments as well—during the past several weeks—most of them depressing.

Chancellor Adenauer fears that any European inspection agreement might endanger his electoral chances in September. France again begins to sound like de Gaulle during World War II—it cannot accept a ban on "fourth nation" manufacture of nuclear weapons since it is a "fourth nation"—not unless the first three halt production first. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and Labour Party leader Hugh Gaitskell differ radically as to whether German reunification should be prerequisite to a first-step arms limitation.

Our government, too, has contributed to the uncertainties in London—and only in small part because of Harold Stassen's alleged diplomatic ineptness. Three times Stassen has been recalled to Washington for a review of his instructions, delaying the talks 22 days. His first recall, April 18-22, was demanded by the Pentagon because he had presented a detailed inspection-zone plan (only a "concept," Stassen called it) to the Russians. His third recall, June 6-13, was prompted by a flurry of protests from our allies over Stassen's handing a 23-page memorandum ("talking paper," said Stassen) to the Russians before an agreed Western position had been reached. The "reprimand" to Stassen on this occasion, which high Administration officials deliberately leaked to the press, was meant to be no more than a gesture of reassurance to Adenauer.

But it was Stassen's second trip to Washington, May 17-26, which produced an important alteration in the American position. The press at the time recorded that the President, after three days of National Security Council meetings, had made a courageous decision to meet the Russians "half way," that Stassen won a great victory. The facts, as they are now pieced together, suggest almost the opposite: that the President postponed

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the application of or shifted ground on four of the five proposals which the US had officially presented to the UN last January. The President apparently yielded to pressure from the Pentagon and the Atomic Energy Commission.

To see the London talks in perspective it is helpful to glance at some chronology of the past five months:

January 14. On instructions from the President and in accordance with a National Security Council paper, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge outlined to the UN five objectives of the US in the current Disarmament Subcommittee talks. These were: (1) that all future production of fissionable materials be used or stock-piled for non-weapons purposes; (2) that nuclear tests be limited and later banned, with advance notice meanwhile; (3) that American and Soviet military personnel be cut to 2.5 million men each, and Britain and France to 750,000 men, provided there was a progressive establishment of air and ground inspection; (4) that space missile tests be put under international control; (5) that an international air and ground inspection system be set up progressively to guard against surprise attack. Point 5 referred specifically to a European inspection zone, which has already been accepted by the other three Western powers at the talks (Britain, France, Canada).

April 8-17. Following Lodge's outline, Stassen set forth in London detailed proposals including one prohibiting any nation from manufacturing fissionable materials for weapons, thus ending the "fourth power" question. Enforcement would be in the hands of inspectors who would have access to both the USSR and the US, but probably only to a few plants in each country.

About this time Stassen was guilty, Washington sources say, of his first breach of instructions. Meeting privately with Russian delegate Valerian Zorin, Stassen advanced the "concept" of a Central European air-ground inspection zone, if it were widened to include about a dozen countries on both sides of the Iron Curtain, plus an arctic zone embracing part of Alaska.

April 18-22. Stassen was brought home. He conferred with the President. The State Department announced the US was still pressing for a "first-step" agreement.

April 30. The Soviet radio announced details of Stassen's "concept" of the two inspection zones and offered a Soviet counter-proposal, which included aerial inspection of some territory in Western Russia and in Siberia, plus all of the US west of St. Louis.

May 17-26. Stassen was again summoned to Washington for a showdown review on disarmament by the National Security Council. Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated publicly that we "cannot trust the Russians on this or anything else." Stassen's derogators, led by Radford and AEC Chairman Lewis Strauss, persuaded the President to narrow the coverage of any "first step." The President's compromise, as now understood, was: (1) the US will support an inspection zone in the Arctic but none in Europe for any purpose—unless the Western European nations voluntarily reach agreement among themselves; (2) a total nuclear test ban will have to await a comprehensive disarmament agreement; and even a temporary suspension or limitation must be linked to the end of nuclear fuel manufacture for military purposes; (3) the fourth power proposal—that is, the banning of all manufacture of fissionable materials for weapons purposes—will be postponed until a comprehensive agreement is reached. In effect, the President modified four of the five proposals presented by Ambassador Lodge to the UN, and thus forced Stassen to renege on his declarations to the Subcommittee. But let this be said for Mr. Eisenhower: he insisted on trying for a first step, however small, when some advisers were for quitting entirely.

May 27. London talks resumed. Stassen immediately encountered difficulties with our allies, especially with NATO representatives at Paris.

May 28. Chancellor Adenauer announced from Washington, after a White House conference, that inclusion of West Germany in the first step agreement "would serve no useful purpose."

May 31. Stassen committed his second "breach of instructions," as Washington sees it, handing a 23-page memo to Zorin. Recall and "reprimand" followed.

June 14. London talks were again resumed. The Russians offered their new plan for nuclear test suspension.

All this stress on the personal role of Stassen permits various interpretations. Several astute political analysts suggest that the Administration is preparing to use Stassen as the scapegoat: if the negotiations fail, the fault is his; if they succeed, the credit goes to the President. Mr. Stassen must be aware of this. It is to his credit that he plods ahead, knowing he may be the fall guy, knowing that he is anything but a favorite in Congress, but persisting nevertheless in the hope that the human race can be rescued from the edge of the abyss.

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Fund for the Republic

THE Fund for the Republic, the only large foundation ever to work exclusively in the area of civil liberties, is, after four years, shifting its major emphasis from action to ideas. The $7 million remaining from its initial grant of $15 million from the Ford Foundation will be used "to study the conditions under which a free society may best be maintained."

The person most responsible for this change is the Fund's inventor, Robert M. Hutchins, who since he replaced Clifford Case as Fund president in 1953 has been a center of controversy—both within and outside the Fund. Hutchins first thought—and this was while the McCarthy menace was making many intellectuals feel desperate—that with enough money he could educate the American people about the meaning and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. He set out to lead what was to be a five-year "crash program" for civil liberties ($3 million per year).

Fellowships and grants-in-aid were awarded; large sums were spent on television and other mass media to tell the story of personal rights. (Large sums were also spent on administrative overhead!) The first major project was a study of Communism in the US—what it is, what it is not and the exact nature and degree of its threat to our freedoms. Big sums were also alloted to ameliorating racial tensions in the South, for studies of blacklisting in the entertainment industry, for the New York Bar Association's study of the federal loyalty-security program. In other words, the Fund rushed in where the cautious or the less well-heeled feared to tread.

And so, inevitably, attacks on the Fund began—led by Fulton Lewis, Jr. The campaign to misrepresent the Fund's actions was not unsuccessful, and Dr. Hutchins' board of directors began to be worried. The majority of the 18-member board, more sensitive to audience reaction than is Hutchins, wondered whether their president was not out to shock, more than to educate.

Then came the attack on the Fund last year by House Un-American Activities Committee Chairman Francis Walter for the Fund's exposure of blacklisting on Broadway and in Hollywood. The attack solidified the Board of the Fund behind Hutchins, but Hutchins had already begun to dream of new vistas. Disappointed with the results achieved by the Fund to date, this "18th Century man with a 20th Century expense account," as one associate has described him, began talking at meetings of the Fund Board about creating a new "community of scholars" who, working together, could "study contemporary US life to determine the conditions under which a free society may best be maintained."

The defense of civil liberties—here and now—against attacks on them by government is no longer, said Hutchins, an adequate purpose. "We must recognize that the fundamental issues of freedom in contemporary life are affected by many institutions other than government"—corporations, unions, mass communications, political parties and private pressure groups, to name a few which were unknown when the Bill of Rights was drafted.

The Board of the Fund bought the new Hutchins doctrine, perhaps with a sigh of relief. Whether the new approach is attributable more to outside attacks on the Fund or to Robert Hutchins' devotion to "great books" and their influence, the effect in either case is a radically new role. The Fund's remaining $7 million will be spent not on the front line, in the immediate defense of civil liberties, but in the detached calm of a scholarly GHQ.

Domestic Tranquillity

"NOW REMEMBER," the wife admonishes her husband as he departs for the office, "you skip your tranquilizer. Watch for him to take his. Then hit him for a raise." The remark was in a *New Yorker* cartoon—but it's no joke. For babies now take tranquilizers for colic, old people for misbehavior, young mothers for jumpy nerves, and just anyone for skin diseases, high blood pressure or queasy stomachs.

An article in the May *Fortune* ("The Tranquilizer Question" by Francis Bello) reports that since 1954, when they first appeared commercially, tranquilizers have been taken by at least 20 million Americans. Last year they brought an estimated $125 million to the nation's druggists and were surpassed in prescription volume only by the broad spectrum antibiotics, sedatives, systematic analgesics, vitamins and antihistamines. This year the druggists are expected to sell nearly $175 million worth of tranquilizers.

Scientists are far from agreed on the tranquilizers' ultimate efficacy and function in formal psychiatric treatment. We do know, however, that mental hospitals have enormously benefited: patients are more cooperative, easier to handle, require far fewer electric shock and insulin coma treatments, and are being discharged at an increasing rate. And although every other one of our hospital beds is still occupied by a mental patient, last year, for the first time since World War II, the population of our state and county hospitals (which take care of all but a tiny percent of our mental patients) declined by a little over 7,000.

As for the widespread use of the drugs outside hospitals, increasing concern is properly being manifest. Last year Congress appropriated $2 million for research on the tranquilizer problem, and a Psychopharmacology Service Center was set up in the National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda. Numerous studies are being made elsewhere of such perplexing questions as the side effects of these drugs (a number of unpredictable results

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have shown up in those who use tranquilizers—including liver and skin disturbances, palsy, and depression).

In addition to the chemical and biological unknowns, there is also the moral question: do we *want* absolute freedom from fear? A Bethesda, Maryland, Unitarian minister recently took Equanil for four days as an experiment. "To me," he reports, " 'happy pills' is a misnomer. I think of happiness as a positive feeling, charged with special energy. . . . Looking back . . . I know I was relaxed because I no longer cared about the things I often worry about. I would not call that feeling happiness. Relief, perhaps, but no more. . . ."

Canada's Conservatives

THE UNITED STATES is the country most likely to feel a change if the Conservatives, who unexpectedly emerged as the largest party in Canada's election, take over the government in Ottawa. The full force of the change will not, perhaps, be felt immediately, since the Conservatives know they face another election within a year and must first prove they can do better than St. Laurent's Liberals in solving Canadian domestic problems.

These problems were the inability of the Canadian government's monopoly Wheat Marketing Board to sell the farmers' harvest; the feeling in the economically backward Atlantic seaboard provinces that their development had been neglected by Ottawa; and the belief in the rich and highly developed provinces of Ontario and British Columbia that the federal government was not allowing them to keep a fair share of tax revenues.

Since the Canadian budget had a surplus of $500 million last year, John Diefenbaker—the Conservative leader—can make an initial gesture toward satisfying provincial economic grievances. He says, also, that he will launch an immediate drive for developing backward areas. And he is considering selling the Canadian wheat for what the world market will offer, accepting payment in foreign currencies which will be used to buy imports from other than US sources—a move toward Canadian economic independence from the US. This may mean a loss for the Canadian Wheat Marketing Board; it may also rock the world wheat market and the US surplus disposal program, but that consequence will not displease the Conservatives one bit. Canadians feel that disposal of US surpluses has been cutting into Canada's traditional wheat markets, as in Poland for instance. So wheat is likely to be the first front on which Washington will feel a Canadian Conservative offensive.

This will be followed by a demand that the US tariff structure be altered to admit not only Canadian raw material and semi-finished products but also manufactured goods. Since Canada is the largest single trading partner of the US, the Conservatives believe they can put pressure on Washington for the tariff deal they want.

Power from the Atom

CONGRESS is again taking a look at our atomic power program to see whether the partnership plan between the federal government and the electric power industry is keeping this country sufficiently in the lead in the development of peaceful uses of atomic energy. It finds that 12 full-scale atomic power reactors are under construction or in the last stages of being negotiated with the Atomic Energy Commission. One of these plants—in Tampa, Florida—will be the first in this country to be fuelled by "raw uranium," a process of special interest to foreign countries: all other American power reactor types require enriched fuel which is a military by-product and is presently obtainable on the world market only from the US.

Four small municipal or cooperative power plants are also scheduled or under construction, with the federal government underwriting 60 to 80 percent of the cost, including the entire reactor cost. No more than 20 percent of the cost of the big private plants is federally subsidized—and here the government share goes mostly for research.

The target date for production of a million kilowatts of atomic power capacity in the US has been pushed back from 1960 to 1962. But this delay is not likely to spur an economy-minded Congress to approve a stepped-up development program wholly at federal expense, such as last year's Gore-Holifield bill sought to set in motion.

By contrast, Great Britain has taken a flying start in the power field, and a recent UN report confirms that British nuclear power stations are already producing electricity at broadly the same rates as coal-fired plants. The British target of 6.5 million kilowatt capacity of atomic power by 1965 is considered entirely feasible.

The speed with which Britain's atomic power program has developed staggers even British experts. For example, Calder Hall—the first full-scale nuclear power station in the world—was opened only last October. But in eight months the program for future development was first doubled, and has now been nearly trebled. Within 12 years, coal will be finished in Britain as a fuel for new electric power capacity. And the cost of atomic power, now still a fraction higher than conventional power, will be halved by 1990. In fact by 1990, electricity from coal-fired stations is expected to cost three times as much as atomic energy.

On the Continent, the six European nations which recently pooled their atomic resources to form Euratom are a step behind Britain, but their intentions are even more ambitious—15 million kilowatt capacity by 1977. This giant cooperative of France, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, West Germany and Italy aims to reduce European dependence upon Middle East oil through the greatest electric power project in history.

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The Debate Over Our China Policy

AT HIS press conference on June 5, Mr. Eisenhower remarked that although our relations with Formosa remain "as of this moment" unchanged, "frankly, I don't see as much advantage in maintaining the [China trade] differential as some people do." This has been taken by *Time* to mean that the President has "hoisted the signals for a reappraisal of . . . the long-standing US quarantine of Communist China."

If *Time* is correct, and we believe it is, in thinking that a reappraisal has begun, it becomes extremely important to understand what the China policy debate is and is not about. It does *not* turn (as "some people" made it appear in past political campaigns) on anyone's patriotism or on whether one is "tough" or "soft" in his opposition to Asian Communism. The debate turns on honest differences with respect to the nature of the present situation in Asia.

The New Republic sees in Communist China a great potential threat to the independence of other Asian nations. We are critical of our government's policy precisely because we believe it has proved and will continue to prove ineffective; that is to say, it fails to produce sufficient strength in Asia (political and economic, as well as military) to withstand Chinese pressures. Those pressures are essentially non-military.

The contrary view to ours is well expressed by the Committee of One Million, a private organization originally set up on the initiative of Rep. Walter Judd (R, Minn.) to oppose Peking's entry into the United Nations but which today also opposes US trade with or recognition of the Peking regime. It has on its steering committee the high-principled and intelligent Senator from Illinois, Paul H. Douglas, and Rep. Chet Holifield, Sen. Jacob Javits and Sen. Richard Neuberger are among many others associated with the Committee. The reasoning of this group is set forth in detail in a recent 13-page memorandum entitled *Relations Between the United States and Communist China.* In that memo, two major arguments against modifying our present China policy are advanced.

The Collapse Thesis. "The Peking regime," asserts the Committee of One Million, "is not in firm control of the mainland." A "severe economic crisis" is reflected in shortages of industrial products, pork, cotton and coal; moreover, consumer unrest and student demonstrations provide "proof that the Chinese people have no love for their Communist slave-masters and are prepared to rise up and overthrow them when the moment is feasible." Trade and diplomatic recognition would be "a rescue operation . . . bolstering the desperately sagging economy of Communist China."

These conclusions are in direct contradiction to those of nearly every qualified scholar and journalist. Nor does the Committee of One Million cite any competent, independent authority to substantiate its opinion. The confusion is perhaps a semantic one. What is meant by a "desperately sagging" economy, or "unrest"?

In Asia every economy has sagged for centuries and still does, as compared with the economies of the industrialized West. *Lagging* describes this "under-developed" state more accurately than *sagging*. As for "unrest," that is a fever which can be expected to rise as Asians learn the possibilities inherent in 20th Century techniques. Chester Bowles accurately calls this fever the "revolution of rising expectations." To interpret frustration at the slow pace of progress as signifying that a government is "not in firm control" is to misinterpret Asia.

Indeed, what is remarkable in China today are not the lags and the shortages, which were to be expected, but rather, as Prof. Yuan Li-Wu of Marquette University concludes in his *Economic Survey of Communist China*, Peking's "impressive forward strides." "There is no denying," he writes, "that economically, a great deal has been accomplished by Communist China in a short span of six years."

BUT, says the Committee of One Million, even the Communists' own newspapers in Peking admit that there have been food riots over shortages. That is true enough, but what inferences does that fact justify? Would a government not in firm control allow its well-controlled press to publicize such uncomplimentary information? Further, do the authors of the Committee memorandum take into account the fact that the present Chinese economy is one of "over-full employment" in which all human resources are being driven to the limit? In an economy that is being pushed forward by relentless State prodding and planning, there are bound to be shortages and bottlenecks. Indeed, shortages and inflationary pressures are built into the economy—and they are quite as much symptoms of strength as they are of weakness.

Similarly, when we read that Mao has made a speech to leading Communist cadres in which he concedes the existence of "contradictions" between the state and the people—even in a Communist society—are we justified in assuming this is good news for the West? Or might not this be evidence of a flexibility and self-confidence that go with strength? In the opinion of Richard Lowen-

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thal of the *London Observer,* one of the shrewdest students of the Communist bloc, Mao's much-discussed "contradictions" thesis means only "a controlled opening of the safety valves of criticism within the party dictatorship." Far from signing the death warrant of his regime, Mao

> has rejected the view that the new bureaucracy is tending to harden into a class with interests of its own . . . and rather sees the evil in "bureaucratism" as an *attitude of mind,* which must be fought by "rectification of thought"—a kind of Communist Moral Rearment. While this view can hardly be described as Marxist, it has evident advantages as a flexible method for keeping a party dictatorship in power.

The Free Asia Thesis. The second major assumption of the Committee of One Million is that even if the Communist regime in China were firmly entrenched, the United States must continue to have nothing to do with China *for the sake of our position in the rest of Asia.* Otherwise,

> we will have helped solidify one of the most potent "fifth columns" in all recorded history—the 12 million overseas Chinese living in Southeast Asia. They will have no choice but to give their allegiance to Red China and to help deliver into its control the countries where they have great power: the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore and the Malay States, Thailand and Burma.

Indonesia and Burma, of course, have been doing business with Peking right along. And in neither of these two countries nor in any of the others cited by the Committee can the overseas Chinese, for all their wealth, "deliver" independent governments into the hands of Peking. "The danger of the overseas Chinese being used as a local Fifth Column by Peking can be exaggerated," noted a former *Chicago Daily News* correspondent in Southeast Asia, A. Doak Barnett, in a survey for Columbia University's 1956 American Assembly. "In much of Southeast Asia the Chinese are small minorities who, despite their economic position, are unpopular and unimportant in local politics."

While hope remained that Chiang might some day return to the mainland, the Chinese trader in Singapore or Manila could and did remain on the political fence. But what calculating trader still believes in that hope? And it *is* the mainland that matters to the overseas Chinese. For there his relatives live, and there he looks for protection against foreign governments.

How little help the overseas Chinese can expect from Chiang has been apparent in the current dispute between Ngo Dinh Diem's regime and the Chinese community in Vietnam. Diem decreed last fall that locally-born Chinese must either become Vietnamese citizens or be banned from small businesses. When local Chinese sought aid from the Nationalist representatives in Saigon, only to discover they could do nothing, they angrily invaded the Nationalist Legation and wrecked the entire first floor of the building.

On May 3, Chiang offered to resettle on Formosa any Chinese who did not want to become Vietnamese, but as the *Christian Science Monitor* reported, "this hardly helped the Chinese in Vietnam, who had no family ties on Formosa and who would have difficulty finding jobs on that crowded island."

What Peking needs from the overseas Chinese is financial support, and it already gets it in the form of remittances to mainland relatives—a key source of foreign exchange for the Communists. The establishment of Chinese Communist embassies throughout Southeast Asia would admittedly facilitate greater pressure for these remittances, but as Peking's power grows, pressure can be effectively applied on the overseas Chinese with or without embassies.

We return to our first point: present US policy is ineffective, for it neither lessens the hold of Communism on the Chinese mainland nor does it diminish the influence of the Chinese Communists throughout the rest of Asia.

No argument of the Committee of One Million is as persuasive as the fact that Pakistan, although a military ally of the US, refuses to ally herself with our policy of non-recognition of Red China. And in Thailand, another US military ally, "what seems to be evolving," according to a *New York Times* report only last week, "is a policy that would retain Thailand's close military and diplomatic ties with the West but would accommodate itself to the fact that Communist China is the dominant power in Asia today."

Thus, an intelligent reappraisal of China policy will begin by recognizing that we cannot, and need not try to, forestall the rise of "neutralism"—which is another word for nationalism in Asia. Attempts by us to prevent these countries from establishing trade and diplomatic relations with Peking will be self-defeating.

IN Asia, as elsewhere, the best American defense against Communist expansion is an offense. Knowing that every Asian country will be increasingly exposed to strong pressures from Peking, it is up to the US to anticipate and counter these pressures with positive programs of its own. What is needed, basically, is not a new China policy, but a new Asian policy, one that does not assume that "neutralism" helps Communism and one that places the United States in vigorous, open competition with China for influence in the major non-Communist countries on the periphery of China—India, Indonesia and Japan.

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The Poet and the Muse

The least controversial phase of Robert Graves' work is his poetry, which most critics concede to be of major importance. His anthropological speculations have always provoked a variety of strong reactions, none more violent than those set off by his publication of The White Goddess *a decade ago. Bemused and infuriated readers thought that Graves had gone out of his mind, or that he was attempting to establish a new religion. Here Mr. Graves offers his own reflections on the book, a sort of skeleton key to* The White Goddess.

Photo Courtesy The Boston Museum of Fine Arts

THE WHITE GODDESS

by ROBERT GRAVES

IN 1944, at a Devonshire village called Galmpton, I was working against time on a historical novel about the Argonauts and the Golden Fleece*, when a sudden overwhelming obsession interrupted me. I stopped marking across my big Admiralty chart of the Black Sea the course which (according to the mythographers) the *Argo* had taken from the Bosphorus to Baku and back. Instead, I began speculating on a mysterious "Battle of the Trees," allegedly fought in pre-historic Britain, and my mind worked at such a furious rate all night, as well as all the next day, that my pen found it difficult to keep pace with the flow of thought.

The obsession resembled one that overtook Friedrich August Kekule von Stradowitz, the chemist, one day in 1859, when he had a vision of serpents waltzing around, tail to mouth, in a ring. Somehow he *knew* what they meant; so he sat down and furiously wrote out his "closed ring" theory of the constituents of benzene. This, fortunately for my argument, is everywhere admitted to be the most brilliant piece of prediction—for though Kekule *knew*, he had no proof—in the whole range of organic chemistry. "Fortunately," because I can now mention Kekule (who thought he was going crazy) in self-justification. If a chemist may be granted a practical vision, why not a poet? Well, within three weeks, I had written a 70,000-word book about the ancient Mediterranean Moon-goddess whom Homer invoked in the *Iliad*, and whom one of his sons, or (as some prefer to think) one of his daughters, invoked in the *Odyssey*; and to whom most traditional poets ever since have paid at any rate lip-service.

The other day I came across the manuscript of my book, which has since swelled to four times the original size; and the uncanny excitement that held me throughout those critical weeks flooded back. I called it *The Roebuck in the Thicket*, after a leading emblem of the Goddess' cult in Wales, Greece and Ireland, and I likened my historical hunt to the chase of that enigmatic beast.

Now, I am no mystic: I studiously avoid witchcraft, spiritualism, yoga, fortune-telling, automatic writing, and so on. I live a simple, normal, rustic life with my wife, my children, and a wide circle of sane and intelligent friends. I belong to no religious cult, no secret society, no philosophical sect; but I do value my historical intuition, which I trust up to the point where it can be factually checked. There's nothing so strange about that, surely? Every good businessman in the service of the mercantile god Hermes knows what a "hunch" is, and always explores its possibilities with statistical care.

* *Hercules, My Shipmate* (new paperbound edition, Universal Library; $1.25).

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Moreover, every great mathematic or scientific discovery has begun as pure hunch: substantiated later by careful calculation.

I have mentioned the sudden obsession that overcame me at Galmpton. The fact is, while working on my Argonaut book, I found the figure of the White Goddess of Pelion growing daily more powerful, until she dominated the story. Listen to this: I had in my work-room several small brass objects from the Gold Coast—bought from a dealer in London—gold-dust weights, mostly in the shape of animals, among them a hump-backed man playing a flute. I also had a small brass box, with a lid, originally used (so the dealer told me) to contain the gold-dust itself.

I kept the humpback seated on the box. In fact, he is still seated on the same box; but I knew nothing about him, or about the design on the box-lid, until ten years later. Then I learned that the humpback represented a herald in the service of the Queen-mother of an Akan State; and that every Akan Queen-mother (there are several reigning today) claims to be a direct incarnation of the Triple Moon-goddess Ngame. The design on the box-lid is a spiral connected by a single line to the rectangular frame enclosing it—the frame having nine teeth on either side—and means: "There is none greater—in the world — than the Triple-goddess Ngame." These gold weights and the boxes for containing the gold dust were made, before the British conquest of the Gold Coast, by craftsmen subservient to the Goddess, and regarded as highly magical.

VERY WELL: put it down to coincidence. Deny that there was any connection at all between the hump-backed herald on the box (proclaiming the magnitude of the Triple Moon-goddess of West Africa and surrounded by brass animals representing Akan clan totems) and myself, who suddenly became obsessed by the White Goddess of Europe, wrote of her clan totems in the Argonaut context, and now had thrust upon me ancient secrets belonging to her cult in Wales, Ireland and elsewhere. Please, believe me: I was wholly unaware that the box celebrated the Goddess Ngame. Or that the Greeks, including the early Athenians, were racially linked with Ngame's people — Libyan Berbers, known as the Garamentians, who moved south from the Sahara to the Niger in the 11th Century A.D., and there intermarried with Negroes. Or that Ngame herself was a Moon-goddess and shared all her attributes with the White Goddess of Greece and Western Europe. I knew only that, according to Herodotus, the Greek Athene was the same goddess as Libyan Neith.

A second disclosure: I completed *The White Goddess** in 1946, when I returned to Majorca soon after the War, and there wrote more particularly about the Sacred King as the Goddess's divine victim; holding that every Muse-poet must, in a sense, die for the Goddess whom he adores, just as the King died. Old Georg Schwarz, my next-door neighbor—a German-Jewish antiquary—had meanwhile died and bequeathed me five or six more gold weights of the same provenience. These included a small, mummy-like figurine with one large eye. It has now been identified by experts on West African art as the Akan King's *okrafo* priest.

I HAD suggested in my book that the King in primitive Mediterranean society was, to begin with, merely the ruling Queen's handsome young consort, and doomed to be sacrificed at the end of his term. But, by early historical times (to judge from Greek and Latin myths) he had won executive power as the Queen's representative, or King, and the privilege of sacrificing a substitute. The same governmental change, I have since learned, took place among the matriarchal Akan, after their southern migration. In Ashanti, Bono, and other states similarly constituted, the King's victim was called the "*okrafo* priest." This particular gold weight happened to be early and unique; the famous Danish expert on African native art, Kjersmeier, who has handled ten thousand gold weights, tells me that he never saw another like it. Dismiss it as a coincidence, if you like, that the *okrafo* figurine lay beside the herald on the gold box, while I was writing about the Goddess's victims.

A third disclosure: After *The White Goddess* had been written, a friend in Barcelona, who knew nothing about the book, asked me to choose myself a gem for a seal-ring, from a collection of Roman gems he had bought. Among them I found a stranger—a banded carnelian seal of the Greek Argonaut period—and the design was a royal stag with a moon on its flank galloping towards a thicket! It is now set in the ring which I am wearing today. Dismiss that as a coincidence, too, if you like.

This reminds me of a cross-examination by Sir Edward Marshall Hall, the celebrated K.C., of a witness in a London murder trial:

MARSHALL HALL: What would you call it if you were walking along a street one Monday morning, and as you passed a certain house a brick fell on your head?

WITNESS: I should call it an accident.

MARSHALL HALL: Very well. And if you walked along the same street on the Tuesday, at the same time of day, and as you passed the same house another brick fell on your head? What would you call that?

WITNESS: I should call it a coincidence.

MARSHALL HALL: Very well. But if it happened a third time? You walked along the same street on the Wednesday, at the same time of day, and as

*First published in England by Faber and Faber; later brought out in this country by The Creative Age Press.

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you passed the same house a third brick fell on your head. What would you call *that?*

WITNESS: I should call it a habit.

Chains of more than coincidence happen so often in my life that if I am forbidden to call them supernatural hauntings, I must call them a habit. Not that I like the word "supernatural"; I find these happenings natural enough, however superlatively unscientific. The avowed purpose of science is to banish all lunar superstitions and bask in the pure light of solar reason. Superstitions are magical beliefs which (as the word conveys) *survive* from some banned faith—being so deeply rooted that to challenge them gives one a most uncomfortable feeling. Usually, the new faith incorporates old superstitions in its religious dogma. I think it is foolish to defy any superstition unless one feels very strongly about its inconvenience or its irrationality—like a Scottish atheist I knew, who had suffered so much from a rigidly Puritan upbringing that he would strop his razor every morning on the leather-bound family Bible. Myself, I wouldn't do that for a thousand dollars. Also, I hate sitting down thirteen to table.

The Church refers this superstition to the Last Supper, as a result of which Judas, the thirteenth guest, hanged himself; but it is far older than that. In fact, it refers to the ancient British calendar-alphabet where the tree of the thirteenth month, the tree of death, with its ragged leaves and corpse-like smell was the Elder—the elder on which, according to British mediaeval legend, Judas hanged himself (though, of course, elders do not grow in Palestine). Nor do I ever fail to bow to the new moon, disregarding the scientific presumption that the moon is merely a dead satellite of Earth; for the moon moves the tides, influences growth, rules the festal calendar of Judaism, Islam and Christianity, and possesses other unaccountable magic properties, known to every lover and poet.

LET me get this straight. Mr. Randall Jarrell, the American poet who is this year Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress, has generously declared that I write good poems; but holds that what say about the White Goddess is grotesque nonsense, a personal fantasy of my own. If he had said that my poems were bad, I should not contradict him, because everyone is entitled to his likes and dislikes and, anyway, no poem is absolutely good. Yet I venture to suggest that, despite my superstitions (inherited from an Irish father) and despite my habit of noting more-than-coincidences, Mr. Jarrell cannot accuse me of *inventing* the White Goddess, or any facts about her worship in ancient days. He views me as a triumphant vindication of Freud's and Jung's psychiatric theories; and bases his analysis on *Good-bye To All That,* an autobiography which I wrote 28 years ago. Well, I shall not repudiate the autobiographical facts of *Good-bye To All That;* indeed, I am re-publishing the book this fall. But I should be a triumphant vindication of Freud's and Jung's theories only if I did not know exactly what my poems were about—if I had to get them psychoanalyzed in order to find out what ailed me.

The truth is that I read Freud as long ago as 1917—critically, too, and found him most unscientific. Freud, indeed, never realized to his dying day that he was projecting a private fantasy on the world, and then making it stick by insisting that his disciples must undergo prolonged psychoanalytic treatment until they surrendered and saw the light. Much the same goes for Jung. My world picture is not a psychological one, nor do I indulge in idle myth-making and award diplomas to my converts. It is enough for me to quote the myths and give them historical sense: tracing a certain ancient faith through its vicissitudes—from when it was paramount, to when it got driven underground and preserved by witches, travelling minstrels, remote country-folk, and a few secret heretics to the newly established religion.

IN scientific terms, no god at all can be proved to exist, but only beliefs in gods, and the effects of such beliefs on worshippers. The majority of scientists, however, are God-worshippers, if no more than metaphorically and for social convenience. The concept of a goddess was banned by Christian theologians nearly two thousand years ago, and by Jewish theologians long before that. The universities have naturally followed suit; though I can't see why a belief in a Father-god's authorship of the universe, and its laws, should be considered any more scientific than a belief in the inspiration of this artificial system by a Mother-goddess. In fact, granted the first metaphor, the second follows logically. If these *are* no more than metaphors. . . .

At all events, the scientists attached to universities continue to respect their theological colleagues. Protestant Doctors of Divinity in particular, who posit the literal existence of an all-powerful God and regard supernatural happenings (many of them scientifically ill-attested) as a proof of His existence. But they would raise their eyebrows at anyone who posited the literal existence of a goddess.

Here they are, I admit, on safe political and sociological ground. Except in a few scattered, semi-civilized tribes, such as those of West Africa and Southern India, the Goddess is everywhere refused official recognition; nor are the times propitious for reviving her worship in a civilized world governed (or misgoverned) almost exclusively by the ambitious male intelligence. So when people write to me, as they often do—not only from what is called the "Screwy State," but also from the hinterland of this highly intellectual Empire State—asking me to help them start an all-American Goddess cult,

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I reply discouragingly. I beg them not to mistake me for a Joseph Smith junior, a Mary Baker Eddy, or that sort of person.

My task in writing *The White Goddess* was to provide a grammar of poetic myth for poets, not to plan witches' Sabbaths, compose litanies and design vestments for a new orgiastic sect, nor yet to preach matriarchy over a radio network. Certainly, I hold that critical notice should be taken of the Goddess, if only because poetry which deeply affects readers—pierces them to the heart, sends shivers down their spine, and makes their scalp crawl—cannot be written by Apollo's rhetoricians or scientists.

TRUE poetic practice implies a mind so miraculously attuned and illuminated that it can form words, by a chain of more-than-coincidences, into a living entity —a poem that goes around on its own (for centuries after the poet's death, perhaps) affecting readers with its internal magic. Since the source of creative power in poetry is not scientific intelligence, but inspiration—however this may be scientifically accounted for—why not attribute inspiration to the Lunar Muse, the oldest and most convenient European term for the source in question?

Let me be plainer still. It is a commonplace of history that what happens on earth gets reflected in theological dogma. When the Chief Priestess of a matriarchal state has been dethroned by patriarchal invaders, the event becomes recorded in religious myth—as the Theban Sphinx-goddess is said to have committed suicide on Oedipus' arrival from Corinth, where a Hittite Sun-cult had taken root; or as Jehovah (according to Isaiah) cut in two with his sword the Sea-serpent Rahab—the ancient Mediterranean Sea-and-Moon-goddess of Palestine whom the Jews banished from Jerusalem. And when a dozen small states, some with patrilinear, some with matrilinear, royal succession, form a federation for mutual convenience, this gets recorded in myth as a heavenly family of gods and godesses—as happened in Greece during the second millennium B.C. And if a revolution breaks out within a matrilinear state, such as Athens, and descent is thereafter reckoned through the father, not the mother, the state goddess is said to have been re-born from the Father-god's head—as happened to Athene at Athens.

The progress of patriarchy in ancient Greece can be gauged by the fortunes of the divine Olympian family. The Achaean Zeus humbled Hera, the Goddess of Argolis, whom he denied all her former powers but that of prophecy; Athene declared that she was "All for the Father"; Apollo pushed his twin Artemis into the shade; Heracles was admitted to Heaven despite Hera's protests; Hestia the Hearth-goddess vacated her seat on the Council in favour of Dionysus; and Aphrodite had become the butt of obscene jokes by the time *The Odyssey* was written. Only the Fertility-goddess Demeter kept her dignified position, and even she had to employ a male priesthood at the Eleusinian Mysteries, and allow the demi-god Dionysus his part in them—according to legend, the Athenians who tried to keep him out, were ignominiously smitten with piles. These events recorded a gradual deterioration in the general position of women —they were pushed out of trade, industry, justice, and local government; and the rise of Platonic philosophy, coupled with the homosexual cult, set them back still further.

The divine honors presently given to world conquerors —a field in which no woman could compete—made women (always the outraged victims of this royal sport) seem of less account than ever. At last, military need forced the Roman Emperor Constantine to humor his predominantly Christian legionaries and junior officers and let them march behind the Cross. Thereupon the long discredited Olympians were banished for ever (apart from a brief come-back under the Emperor Julian) and superseded by the all-male Christian Trinity.

Women then went down in status still further, since Christianity brought with it the Hebrew myth of Adam's rib and Eve's apple; and they could not even point to Sappho's poems and say: 'Well, at least a woman wrote these!'—because the Church had been at great pains to hunt out and burn all the copies, on the untenable excuse that Sappho was a Lesbian in more senses than one. But the bottom of the trough had been reached, and women's social position improved markedly about the 11th Century A.D.

This change has been attributed to the abolition of slavery and to the continuous wars that followed the break-down of central government in the West; and particularly to the Crusades, which obliged the warrior-princes and nobles to leave their small and independent estates in the hands of their ladies while they were away. The ladies had to keep accounts, buy and sell, see that the fields were sown and the crops fetched in, watch the work of the castle artisans, manage the brewing, weaving, and other necessary crafts, educate the children, learn to be physicians and surgeons. In earlier days, these matters would have been attended to by a trusty slave or freedman.

IT was in this period (now called the Age of Chivalry) that Romantic poetry began, nourished on the ancient Arthurian myths of Wales and Brittany. Normans carried the Arthur legend to countries as distant as Scotland, Majorca and Sicily—since when the locals have claimed that King Arthur lies concealed under this hill or that in their own territory, waiting for his eventual resurrection. At the same time, the Virgin Mary, hitherto a dim figure—but for the few heretical sects of the Middle

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East who secretly identified her with the dethroned Goddess—suddenly rose in theological esteem. She would have risen still further but for the check she received in certain vigorous male-minded Protestant regions, such as Southern and Eastern England (where the hatred of Mariolatry was a leading cause of the Roundhead Revolution), Eastern Germany, parts of the Low Countries, and New England. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church has given the Virgin many of the attributes that belonged to the ancient Triple Moon-goddess; and she can now legitimately be saluted as "the Queen of Heaven"—the very title borne by Rahab (the Goddess Astarte), against whom the prophet Jeremiah declaimed in the name of monotheistic Father-god Jehovah.

While the present technological civilization, which is largely of Protestant impulse, maintains itself, with men holding the key positions in industry, law, trade, medicine, science, and government, the Virgin cannot rise beyond the rank conceded her. But if this system collapses—or if, instead, it reaches the stage of perfect nuclear automation, in which men do not need to work so hard as now to provide and distribute the necessities of life—then social changes may well follow: changes that will obviously be reflected in religious dogma. The new Heaven may house two gods and a goddess; or even, as in pre-Christian Rome, pre-Exilic Jerusalem, and pre-Roman Carthage, two goddesses, one of intuition, one of fertility, aided by a technological male god of the Vulcan type.

I OFFER this merely as speculation. Yet the growing popularity of Muse-poets (as opposed to Apollonian poets who glorify male intelligence, male courage, male energy) and the growing mistrust of orthodox Christian dogma among the educated classes throughout the Western World, suggests that such a religious revolution may already be brewing. Meanwhile, in all Christian Churches, the Virgin is allowed no female characteristics which might threaten male supremacy; she is merciful, gentle, pure, patient, obedient — making no parade of wisdom and promoted to motherhood without having loved in ordinary female fashion. If wise, she modestly hides her wisdom, and though her bodily Assumption to Heaven is now dogma at Rome, she has no priestesses to perform her mysteries, but only priests of the triune male God.

The Welsh minstrels dared, at one period, to identify the Virgin with their pagan Muse-goddess Caridwen; but this heresy could come to nothing, because Caridwen had been very far from being a nun. In fact, the White Goddess has never been monogamic and has never shown pity for the bad, the ineffective, the sterile, the perverted, the violent, or the diseased: though loving and just, she is ruthless. Her symbol is the double-axe—consisting of two moon-like blades, one crescent, one decrescent, set back to back and fitted with a haft. The crescent blade represents blessing, increase, joy; the decrescent blade represents cursing, plague and sorrow that punish human folly and disorder. The Muse-poets have always recognized these two blades: poetry proper is the constructive side of their profession, satire the destructive side.

MR. JARRELL accuses me of a sort of schizophrenia in thinking so highly of women and cheerfully accepting the more disagreeable side of their nature, although, as he points out, I have been, in my day, a boxer, a full-back at football, and a fighting soldier. But is that so strange? Was it not the code of mediaeval chivalry, which the troubador poets extolled in the Virgin's name, to be a parfit gentle knight: a lion in battle, a lamb in the bower, however cruel one's mistress? Have British soldiers fought less gloriously when they served a queen rather than a king—Elizabeth, Anne, Victoria? It is a complete fallacy that the toughest fighter is the cave-man who knocks his women about. The most miraculous victory against odds in Classical times was won by the Epizyphyrian Locrians of Calabria against their neighbors of Croton; and these Locrians were then the only people in Europe who still had a matrilineal constitution, with the women politically in the ascendant and a supreme Moon-goddess their sole deity.

I am aware that the Protestant dogma reflects well enough the sociological set-up of, say, the United States Bible Belt, non-conformist Britain, and the Dutch Reformed Church in Holland and South Africa. Most devout Christian women in those Churches are perfectly content with their present position, and therefore with the Virgin Mary as a representative of womankind. They look up to their husbands, give in to them, take motherhood seriously, do not consider themselves the equal (let alone the superiors) of man, restrain their wayward passions, take up good causes, neglect their own looks, and do not grudge men their monopoly of the priesthood. They sometimes even take a masochistic delight in being ill-treated, abused and betrayed by extravagantly swaggering he-men, while they pinch and scrape. They are not to be either praised or pitied—that's how they come. But they cannot appreciate Muse-poetry. For them the Apollonian poet, even the fraudulent rhetorician, or the prosy-hymn-writer, suffices. Yet it is a question how far Chaucer's "Patient Griselda," or Bunyan's Christiana, or David Copperfield's wife Agnes, are the results of domestic conditioning; whether they differ in circumstances, rather than in nature, from the numerous predatory women of our own day, born in unhappy homes and soured by the patriarchial system, who enjoy breaking up insecure marriages and making a living from male weakness and credulity.

Do I think that poets are literally inspired by the White Goddess? That is not a proper question.

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What would you think if I asked you if, in your opinion, the Hebrew prophets were literally inspired by God? Whether God is a metaphor or a fact cannot be reasonably argued: let us likewise be discreet on the subject of the Goddess. All we can know for sure is that the Ten Commandments, said to have been promulgated by Moses in the name of a Solar God, still carry religious force for those hereditarily prone to accept them; and that scores of poems written in the Muse-tradition still carry the authentic moon-magic for those hereditarily prone to accept that. Apostles of Solar Reason "scorning the lunar ray" may reject such poems as idle or nonsensical; but respectable anthropologists (and anthropologists are scientists) now give *de facto* if not *de jure* recognition to all sorts of crazy deities, male and female—such as the Voodoo deities of Haiti (some of African origin; others renegade Catholic saints) — whose invocation causes ecstatic behavior in their worshippers and produces if not miraculous, at least inexplicable, phenomena.

By ancient religious theory the White Goddess becomes incarnate in her human representative—a priestess, a prophetess, a queen-mother. No Muse-poet can grow conscious of the Muse except by experience of some woman in whom the Muse-power is to some degree or other resident.

A Muse-poet falls in love, absolutely, and his true love is for him the embodiment of the Muse. In many cases the power of absolutely falling in love soon vanishes; if only because the woman takes no trouble to preserve whatever glory she gets from the knowledge of her beauty and the power she exercises over her poet-lover. She grows embarrassed by this glory, repudiates it, and ends up either as a housewife or a tramp; he, in disillusion, turns to Apollo who, at any rate, can provide him with a livelihood and intelligent entertainment—and goes out of circulation before his middle twenties. But the real, perpetually obsessed Muse-poet makes a distinction between the Goddess as revealed in the supreme power, glory, wisdom and love of woman, and the individual woman in whom the Goddess may take up residence for a month, a year, seven years, or even longer. The Goddess abides; and it may be that he will again have knowledge of her through his experience of another woman.

MR. JARRELL, having read my autobiography, concludes that when the woman in whom the Goddess was once resident for me abdicated, I identified myself for all intents and purposes with the Goddess. He writes, very naughtily: "There is only one Goddess, and Graves is her prophet, and isn't the prophet of the White Goddess the nearest thing to the White Goddess?"

I flatly deny that, even though Mr. Jarrell claims to have found general confirmation of his theory "in Volume Seven of Jung's Collected Works — the second part of the essay entitled *The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious.*" No, my autobiography was written nearly 30 years ago, and much has happened to me since, as he might well have deduced from my later poems. Being in love does not, and should not, blind the poet to the cruel side of woman's nature—the decrescent axe-head—and many Muse-poems are written in helpless recognition of this by men whose love is no longer returned.

PILGRIM: "As ye came from the Holy land
Of Walsinghame,
Met you not with my true love
By the way as ye came?"

TRAVELLER: "How should I know your true love,
That have met many a one
As I came from the holy land,
That have come, that have gone?"

PILGRIM: "She is neither white nor brown,
But as the heavens fair;
There is none hath her divine form
In the earth, in the air."

TRAVELLER: "Such a one did I meet, good sir,
Such an angelic face,
Who like a nymph, like a queen, did appear
In her gait, in her grace."

PILGRIM: "She hath left me here alone,
All alone, as unknown,
Who sometime did me lead with herself,
And me loved as her own."

TRAVELLER: "What's the cause that she leaves you alone
And a new way doth take,
That sometime did you love as her own,
And her joy did you make?"

PILGRIM: "I have loved her all my youth,
But now am old, as you see:
Love likes not the falling fruit,
Nor the withered tree."

It will be noticed that the Elizabethan poet has loved one woman all his life, and is now old. Why is she not old, too? Because he is describing the Goddess, not the individual woman. The same is true of Wyatt's:

> They flee from me who sometime did me seek
> With naked foot stalking within my chamber . . .

It is not *"She flees from me,"* but *"They flee from me":* namely the women who were in turn illumined for Wyatt by the lunar ray that commanded his love—beginning with Anne Boleyn, later Henry VIII's unfortunate queen.

I hesitate to delve into Mr. Jarrell's emotional biography as a means of discovering how far he regards romantic falling-in-love as a grotesque pathological event. But I cannot think the act unmanly, or discreditable, far less grotesque. Nor am I a prophet of the

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Goddess. To acknowledge the Goddess' power is a very different matter from saying in a ringing baritone: "Thus saith the Goddess!" A simple loving declaration: "There is none greater in the universe than the Triple Goddess!" has been made by every Muse-poet in the English language (and by countless others, down the centuries) though the Goddess is sometimes, of course, given such cautiously abstract titles as "Nature," "Truth," "Beauty," "Poetry." Myself, I think it most unlikely that this grotesque habit will end for a few centuries yet.

You think perhaps that I am holding out on you by not trying to account for the hauntings? But surely it is enough to record what there is no logical means of evaluating? When a simple citizen, who is neither very good, very wicked, nor very anything else, is struck dead by lightning while running for shelter to the Subway, and is the only victim of the storm, what do people call that? They call it an act of God: meaning that it was a blind accident. Well, then, what should you call a more-than-coincidence of the sort I have described?

This brings me to my fourth disclosure. I offered *The White Goddess* in turn only to publishers who claimed to be concerned with poetry and mythology.

The first regretted that he could not recommend this unusual book to his partners, because of the expense. He died of heart failure within the month.

The second wrote very discourteously, to the effect that he could not make either head or tail of the book, and could not believe it would interest anyone. He died too, soon afterwards.

But the third, who was T. S. Eliot, wrote that it must be published at all costs. So he did publish it, and not only got his money back, but pretty soon was rewarded with the Order of Merit, the Nobel Prize for Literature, and a smash hit on Broadway.

Very well, call these coincidences! But I beg you not to laugh yet! Wait! I beg you not to laugh, unless you can explain why the second publisher should have dressed himself up in a woman's panties and bra one afternoon, and hanged himself from a tree in his garden. (Unfortunately, the brief report in *Time* did not specify the sort of tree.)

Was that a blind *act of God*, or was it a calculated *act of Goddess*? I leave the answer to you; all I know is that it seemed to me natural enough in its horrid way.

I must end by driving home my main point. A poem which is moon-magical enough to walk off the page — if you know what I mean—and to keep on walking, and to get under people's skins and into their eyes and throats and hearts and marrows: that is more-than-coincidence at its most miraculous. And Solar Apollo, for all his new thinking-machines and rhyming dictionaries and analytic courses in poetry-writing, can't begin to imitate it.

Do We Need Formosa?

by NATHANIEL PEFFER

TO WITHDRAW from Formosa, argue the defenders of our present policy, would impair our prestige in Asia and betray the Chinese in Southeast Asia who look to Formosa as their homeland, protector and symbol of liberty. No one who knows much of Asia and is open-minded can accept either of these arguments. For nothing has so damaged American prestige in Asia—except in South Korea and possibly in the Philippines and Viet-Nam—or aroused so much suspicion of our motives in Asia as what has been done in Formosa to protect the Chiang Kai-shek regime. That regime is looked on as a puppet in an American "imperialist" show, and the island itself as a base for future military aggression. Unjust no doubt, but that is what is believed. As for the Southeast Asia Chinese, there is no evidence of deep allegiance to the Formosa government. The adults among them do not think much of the mainland Chinese government, but neither do they think much of the Formosa government. And the majority of the youths are inclined toward the Communist government.

The only argument for which anything might be said is the security argument—Formosa as our defense "bastion." It is argued that if the Communists regained Formosa they could mount an attack on the Philippines and Southeast Asia as the Japanese did in 1941. Perhaps they could; but they can also mount such an attack without Formosa, and if they wanted to risk a general war they could do so tomorrow even with the American base in Formosa and the Seventh Fleet in its waters. The Chinese Communists have for some time been constructing air bases on the coast, especially in Fukien directly opposite Formosa. They could attack the Philippines and Okinawa just as easily from Amoy or Canton as from Formosa. And if they decide to attack, the string of bases along the coast will be well enough equipped with planes—Russian planes—to neutralize American air

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power in Formosa. They will not attack until they are so equipped, with or without Formosa. And then Formosa will be for the United States an Achilles heel rather than a bastion.

Formosa is a liability, not an asset, so long as there is on the mainland opposite a hostile and powerful country supported by the still greater power of the Soviet Union. So long as China is an ally of the Soviet Union it can amass greater air power than can America over Formosa. What Formosa means to America, then, depends on whether China proper is hostile or friendly or at least neutral. It is for this reason that the central problem of American policy in the Far East is its relation to China. If we can settle amicably our differences with China, a Formosan settlement will come as a corollary.

NO ONE—no one outside Formosa—any longer believes that Chiang Kai-shek or his successor can recover China proper by an attack from Formosa. By disembarrassing ourselves of that delusion, we have at least advanced one step toward common sense in the Far East. Formosa has not been taken by the Communists only because of the US Seventh Fleet and because of the certainty in Peking that such a move would precipitate a general war. This is to say that until the US withdraws from Formosa, a considerable part of our Navy must remain in Formosan waters. If forever, then forever. And we must continue to allot a large share of US air power to that island.

Here the psychological factor enters. No alien military force in occupation, even a friendly occupation, is ever popular. This is so well attested in experience that it has almost the force of an axiom in international affairs. The episode in Taipei four weeks ago cannot be expected to be the last. And if the Communists should attack Formosa or even infiltrate to any extent, the position of the Americans there may be precarious

What then is to be done? We can, of course, go on doing what we're doing now—giving Chiang a guarantee against attack, keeping the Seventh Fleet in Formosan waters—and air bases and guided missiles on the island; providing money, arms and military advisers for Chiang's forces. If we do this, we remain at swords' points with China. It could be fascist, constitutional monarchist or republican China and still be irreconcilably hostile. For no mainland regime with any pretensions to dignity or concern for its safety would long tolerate the existence of an island off its shore in the hands of a declared enemy, and one supported by a great power which is a potential enemy. It will do so only as it has to; it will bide its time.

Thus, by going on as we are, we are giving a hostage to fortune, or rather to accident. The Chinese are prone to crossing Rubicons without reflecting on what is on the other side. Chiang Kai-shek, worried because both he and his army are growing older, might precipitate a clash. The Communists might do the same, either for external diversion or in bitterness at American efforts to ostracize them, or because they thought world tension would provide a helpful cover for an attack.

Or Russia might decide to put the US to the test. Since we are bound by treaty to defend Formosa, any clash between Formosa and the Communist government would mean a formal Chinese-American war. In such a war, America would fight without allies. Syngman Rhee would be pinned down by the North Koreans. Viet-Nam would be pinned down by the Communists to the north. The Philippines are without force, as is Thailand. The rest of Asia would sympathize with Communist China. Europe certainly would not support us. Even the British would not give token support. That such a war could be kept from expanding is hardly possible. Russia is bound to China by a treaty of alliance. It would either come in directly at once or feed enough planes and arms to China to keep it fighting and wearing us down until Moscow decided the time was propitious to come in itself.

In any case the initiative is not ours. Decision will be taken by others. We shall have no choice. We would fight a war with a minimum of sympathy. Our closest allies would hold it against us that a world war in which they faced extinction had come about over Formosa, a cause in which they have no interest or concern and the justice of which they consider doubtful.

IF WE would escape this, we are left with no alternative but compromise through negotiation. Two of the subjects in controversy with China must be faced: recognition of the Peking regime and its admission to the United Nations. If there were a return to reason, these could be dealt with simply, for nothing stands in the way except our own rigid obstinacy. On all historical precedent the burden of proof is against those who oppose recognition. The Communist regime has been in power for seven years, and there is no indication that it can be overthrown for a long time. Certainly our refusal to deal with it does not hasten the overthrow. On the contrary, it permits the leaders of the regime to portray us to the Chinese people as their enemy, and this is all the more likely to bind their loyalty to it.

And what is to be lost by recognition? In what way and to what are we thereby committed, what disadvantage do we suffer, what risk do we run, merely by exchanging ambassadors and discussing directly the routine questions that arise between countries? We need not give anything; we need not even give trust. We merely acknowledge that the government of China exists and that the existence of a country containing about a fifth of the world's population must be acknowledged.

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In return, we shall have the opportunity to watch it directly and closely, particularly desirable in a country one does not trust.

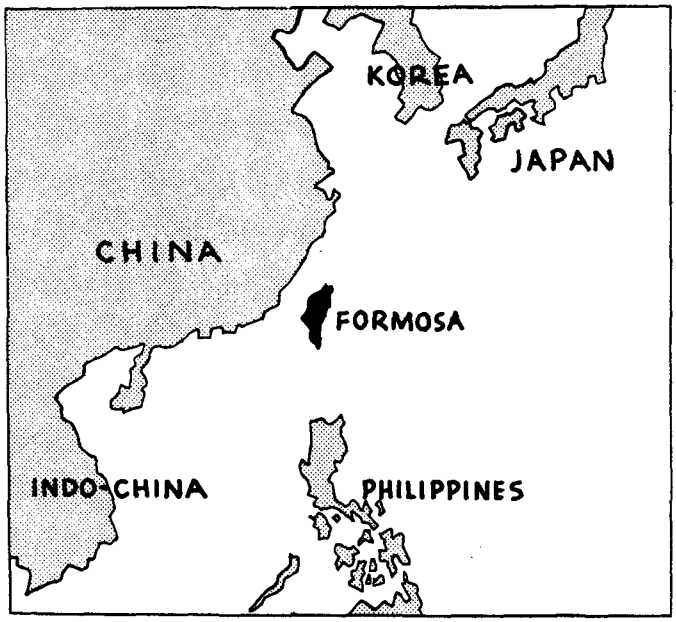
So far as admission to the United Nations is concerned, even our allies are becoming increasingly impatient at what they consider our blind intransigence; they may yet take the decision from us and vote to admit Communist China whether we like it or not. It remains to be shown what harm that would do us. What could China do in the Security Council that Russia cannot already do? How would our own security be jeopardized in or out of the United Nations? For one thing, we also have veto power. Both recognition and admission to the UN have to come sooner or later. Why later?

There is the matter of the trade embargo against China. Here too our allies have become impatient as we have seen in the independent action just taken by the British. It is preposterous to refuse to trade with China in commodities that we send to the Soviet Union, which can then sell them to China, thus, incidentally, increasing China's dependence on and binding it more closely to Moscow. If we had set out deliberately to throw China into the arms of the Soviet Union, we could not have done a better job than we have done. The prevailing embargo against China will be loosened whether we like it or not.

Against these concessions we can—and should—legitimately ask that China evacuate North Korea and commit herself not to interfere in Southeast Asia. If China refuses and negotiations therefore fail, world opinion will incline toward us, as it does not now. And if China breaks her engagements, world opinion will become even more critical of the Mao regime.

THAT much being laid down, we can now consider the tough question of Formosa. It has been proposed that two Chinas be created, but this is impractical. Neither Chinese side would agree or permanently abide by such agreement. There is no prospect that the United States will abandon its protection of Formosa and leave the way clear for Communist conquest. There is no prospect that Chiang Kai-shek will voluntarily recede. There is no prospect that the Communists voluntarily will renounce their claim to Formosa. There is one possible compromise: this is by an agreement underwritten by Communist China, Formosa, the United States and the United Nations to place Formosa under United Nations jurisdiction, to be administered by a high commission composed of representatives of three minor powers chosen from different regions.

They could bring supervisory staff, leaving ordinary functions to be carried out by Chinese who are resident in Formosa, both those born there and those who left the mainland. Asylum would be given at once to those



leaders who wanted to leave. This status would be guaranteed for ten years. Then a plebiscite would be held, also under United Nations supervision, to decide whether the island should remain a United Nations ward, become independent or revert to the mainland. We can pass over tacitly the mental reservation that sooner or later it will revert to the mainland no matter what regime is in power there. We can hope by that time there will be a general easing in international relations and the change can be managed without inflammable results.

Compromise on these terms would not bring about immediate concord with China; that is not necessary. But it would eliminate or moderate what is almost the certainty that, with the present situation prolonged, somehow at some time something will arise out of which will come first incident, then collision, then a regional war enlarging to world cataclysm. And it might help restore some perspective to our view. It might correct our distorted estimate of China's power, our exaggeration of its present strength and its prospective strength. The fact is that China is an unindustrialized country, that it will not be fully industrialized for years, certainly not to the point where it can provide for itself the complex weapons without which modern war cannot be fought. It will first have to learn to make automobiles, to say nothing of inter-continental missiles and hydrogen bombs. The danger China levies derives from its affiliation to Russia; but the source of the danger is Russia's power. The immediate future of the world will be determined by what happens between America and Russia, not by what happens between America and China—unless the present impasse is broken by a war that none really intends and yet that none can avoid. It is to prevent this that some general settlement with China is indispensable, even if both sides have to concede something—a condition not unique in international relations anywhere or at any time.

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BOOKS & COMMENT

The Women and the Orphan Child

by Victor Lange

MISS MCCARTHY'S new book has a quality of gentleness and warmth for which her earlier fiction scarcely prepared us. What she has written so far has been of the fashionably acid and shocking kind: it is concerned on the whole, even to the point of ruthlessness, with the discrepancy in an urban and aggressive society between moral jargon and the inanity of pretentious action, with the atrophy of feeling and the protective surrogate of sentimentality and middle-class convention. These defects in our life she has represented with an unmerciful eye for weakness and vulgarity. *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood* is no less skeptical towards the world of the past half-century in which she grew up, but it is more perceptive, more critical of her own resources of understanding, and therefore, more mature, than any of her previous fiction. Miss McCarthy's account of her experiences in a Seattle convent is clearly related in impulse to Stendhal's profoundly ironic description of Julien Sorel's conflict between faith, intelligence and power; and the terrifying study in cruelty which at least one of these pieces elaborates has, in substance and manner, much in common with the grim interplay of inhumanity and bonhomie in Dickens.

Memories of a Catholic Girlhood, by Mary McCarthy (Harcourt, Brace; $3.95).

The eight biographical vignettes of this memoir are, in a comprehensive sense, studies in detection. The figures of parents and grandparents, of aunts or teachers, people who played a decisive role in the upbringing of an orphaned child, and who, in the course of years, have assumed almost mythical stature, are not only given remarkable presence but are tested as to the reality that seemed to the child concealed in their formalized images. Miss McCarthy is remarkably clever in first producing a host of ambiguous figures and then—as she stalks and encircles them, as she weighs the reliability of her own judgment—in probing them and thus fixing something of their elusive reality. The language of the book revolves around such terms as "discoverer," "suspect," "puzzle," "come to realize," "as far as I could make out," "I did not know," "it occurred to me only later," etc.

Memories of a Catholic Girlhood offers, then, first of all a superb gallery of characters, elaborately and minutely recalled, caught precisely by their gestures, their mannerisms, their speech or their silences; each of them plays a role in a world whose coherence seems dubious to the perspicacious child:

> Aunt Margaret, *née* Sheridan, was a well-aged quince of forty-five, with iron-gray hair shading into black, a stiff carriage, high-necked dresses, unfashionable hats, a copy of *Our Sunday Visitor* always under her arm—folded, like a flail—a tough dry skin with soft colorless hairs on it, like dust, and furrowed and corrugated, like the prunes we ate every day for breakfast.

But each figure assumes in the telling a reality far more complex and metaphorical than we have reason to expect in a work of straightforward autobiographical recollection. The central character of the most skillful story in the book ("A Tin Butterfly") is "the man we had to call Uncle Myers," a man of

> . . . capricious brutality . . . the perfect type of rootless municipalized man who finds his pleasures in the handouts or overflow of an industrial civilization. . . . He liked bandstands, band concerts, public parks devoid of grass; skywriting attracted him; he was quick to hear of a department-store demonstration where colored soap bubbles were blown, advertising a soap, to the tune of "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles," sung by a mellifluous soprano. . . . He seldom left the house except on one of the purposeless errands, or else to go to a ball game, by himself.

Extraordinary figures such as these are given their actuality and their dimensions of horror or pathos or vacuity not only by virtue of Miss McCarthy's lively sense of detail and circumstantial evidence, but by the interplay of the double perspective of child and adult. The book is first of all the story of the mysteries and agonies of a childhood in which the expected severity and indifference, and the unexpected moments of magic are often rendered with the naïve directness of a fairy-tale. Yet, there is little in the book that is not at the same time controlled and scrutinized by the skeptical judgment of the adult.

MISS MCCARTHY'S given situation of the orphan lends itself, of course, especially well to her pervading theme of the isolated life in a community that seems to operate without readily plausible motives or relationships. From beginning to end this tension between the orphaned life and the recognition of sustaining roots recurs as one of the major impulses.

It is an admirable stroke of design to place the story of Miss Harriet Gowrie, the Scottish teacher of Latin, and the performance of the school play, in the middle of the book; because in the coincidence of the stern but ambiguous classical scholar and the assumption by the child of the heroic role and pose of Catiline, there emerges the reality of the moral issue. If this incident marks, in a sense, the end of her childhood, the child has yet, at this point, found a relationship: the Roman and the Presbyterian denial of self contains for the child an impressive model of behavior. But the faith which this *Doppelgaenger*-figure offers to the child remains as yet rhetorical, that is to say, unexplored and beyond comprehension:

> I have only to summon up Miss Gowrie's tall, doll-like figure, with its rigid, jerky movements, and remember the mechanical pivoting of the round head and the short blink of the staring eyes to recognize the possibility of mild clinical symptoms of the disease that adjusts itself to routine, to the performance of monotonous tasks, while the "real" patient, withdrawn, lives in a world of garish fantasies and symbols.

In the later stories the child learns to

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confront and explore other though no less inscrutable forms of order: there is no reason to dissipate the meaning of the title by suggesting that the term "catholic" is used in any but the most specific sense. For the varieties of religious faith, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish to which the child is exposed, are in each chapter treated with obvious seriousness. Miss McCarthy does not presumptuously enter into matters of doctrine; each part of the *Memories* deal, first and foremost with a pattern of formulated behavior which the child learns to face, to investigate and, gradually, to cope with.

The puzzling figures, the disturbing settings, or the demanding and absorbing forms of faith become intelligible or, at least, identifiable for the child to the extent to which they offer an historical structure. "Uncle Myers appeared to have no history," and Miss Gowrie had

> . . . no private life or history and consisted totally of national attributes . . . like one of those wooden dolls dressed in national costume that they show at fairs and expositions. And her appearance was like an illustration to anthropologist's textbook.

It puzzled her grandmother Preston that anyone should want to find out something about her family history: " 'All those old things, Mary,' she would say to me half grumpily, 'why do you keep asking me all those old things?' "

To have no history is to have no place —the chapter entitled "Yellowstone Park" is a superb account of a young girl's attempt at orientation and "joining" in a locale without human or, indeed, geographical context. To be without history and, above all, without curiosity, is also to stand still, hopelessly condemned, as Miss McCarthy says, to a life encumbered with a mysterious burden of feeling.

THE manner of Miss McCarthy's book is — not unlike Goethe's autobiography—ironic in the serious sense of that word: it does not pretend to offer us either barren facts or spurious truth, but hints as to the infinite inconclusiveness of insight and judgment. Each story casts light upon the others and, except for the last, Miss McCarthy provides for each a quizzical commentary, a series of reflections, not so much apologetic or merely disarming, as beautifully in keeping with her theme of self-scrutiny and articulation.

The final section—an extraordinary, rich portrait of her Jewish grandmother —is, I think, one of her finest pieces of writing, and at the same time the most subtle resolution of the book as a whole: it shows us the mature woman confronting her nearly legendary grandmother, and at the same time recollecting and probing the child's image of her, the fairy-tale in an enchanted house. This piece is, obliquely but tellingly, entitled "Ask me no Questions"; and as the dominating but utterly aloof and austere woman is recreated, all that has gone before is tied together; youth and old age are now drawn into a unison of comprehension.

The shock of disenchantment has always been one of the favorite topics and modes of McCarthy's storytelling. But while in her earlier work she has not often been able to pass beyond revulsion and disgust, in these *Memories* her discovery of the true impulse behind the seductive gesture is achieved with an understanding that does not insist on the liberties of detachment but acknowledges the inescapable challenge of involvement and dependence.

A World Without O's

by Gerald Weales

JAMES THURBER'S new fairy story, *The Wonderful O* is—like *The Thirteen Clocks* and as fairy stories should be—an adventure in which good bests evil. There is, however, a political tone to the new book which places it nearer in spirit to some of the *Further Fables for Our Time* than to the earlier fantasy. It suggests, for instance, the fable of "The Bears and the Monkeys" in which the moral is, "It is better to have the ring of freedom in your ears than in your nose." The inhabitants of the strange island of Ooroo in Thurber's new story learn the moral about freedom, "the word that glowed and glittered," and so save themselves from Black and Littlejack and the terrible new doctrine of O-lessness, "a messy lessness, whose meaninglessness nevertheless attracts the few . . ."

The Wonderful O, by James Thurber (Simon and Schuster; $3.50).

The story begins like a good-natured parody of *Treasure Island* with a map, a ship and a crew of villains. Littlejack is even Long John cut down to size. But once the treasure-seekers reach Ooroo and begin the search for the second map, the one that marks the spot where the treasure lies, the political and, strangely, the philosophical take over. Black, who is the chief of the villains, detests the letter O (he sails in a ship called *Aein*) and decides to search for the map by breaking into everything (closets, cupboards, etc.) whose name contains the hated letter. From there, it is a short step to the banning of the letter ("I'll get rid of O, in upper case and lower") and finally to the destruction of all objects and ideas that contain an O. A rascally lawyer Mr. Hyde (Thurber *has* been re-reading Stevenson), joins the oppressors and rules on the acceptable and the forbidden. It is he who gives O-lessness its rationale: "We shall all have an equal lack of opportunity. We shall all have the same amount of nothing." The emphasis in the destruction is *on* the arts—literature, music, architecture—and on nature — flowers, trees, animals. The warmth and comfort of domesticity is upset when Black's hatred invades the home, disrupts cooking, stops work and throws O-less obstacles in the way of love.

Andreus, the poet, and Andrea, the maiden, are the chief voices that speak out against Black and Littlejack; they are joined by the nameless Old Man with the memory of better days. "There are four words with O," says Andrea. "You mustn't lose them." Hope, love, valor and—finally, at the end of the book—freedom: these are the forces that defeat Black. They cannot do it alone, however, for there is the need of an Enchanted Castle and of a mysterious wood where all the O-filled small animals, insects and plants (those Black has

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considered too insignificant to banish) trip up and trouble the wicked men.

There are very beautiful sentences in the book, warm and wise and surprising as those that one has come to expect from Thurber, and there are even more experiments with rhyme within the prose than there were in *The Thirteen Clocks*. Yet *The Wonderful O* is disappointing, for while Thurber plays with his lists of words his adventure nods and his characters grow pale. His hero and his heroine, for instance, are completely colorless. It is the cross of good people in fairy stories that they should be less interesting than the evil ones; even Saralinda and Zorn of Zorna in *The Thirteen Clocks* are wan beside the evil Duke. Still, the reader of the earlier book carries away a picture of Saralinda coming down the stairs and of Zorn, as a minstrel, singing through the streets; Andrea and Andreus make no impression. Only Mr. Hyde, with his lawyer's fondness for hair-splitting, is amusing as a character, and he is inconsistent because he is at times an out-and-out villain, at others a man so intoxicated by nuance that he stands up to Black for the sake of a quibble.

Thurber has always been fascinated with words. When that fascination has focused on sound, the result has often been happy, as in some of the *Further Fables*. When his fondness goes the way of the word game, as it sometimes does in his *New Yorker* occasional pieces and as it certainly does in *The Wonderful O*, the result is likely to be attractive only to other word-game players and to dictionary readers. A fairy tale should go singingly about its business of story-telling. When it stops, as this one does to show too often the effects of O-lessness (a man ordering fur canes, for instance, and meaning four canoes) the story comes to a halt. Lve f wrds, becming a lcal jke, rbs humr f jy.

Half-Asleep in the Deep

by Donald Malcolm

IN this rather sloppily written chronicle of the North Atlantic, Captain Alan Villiers demonstrates the kind of sturdy common sense that refuses to cringe before the inexplicable. Indeed, he calmly takes it upon himself to solve the greatest nautical mystery of them all, that of the brigantine, *Mary Celeste*.

Wild Ocean, by Alan Villiers (McGraw-Hill; $5).

This famous vessel was discovered off the Azores in 1872, in perfect order and under full sail, but *without a soul on board*. The remains of breakfast, including a steaming cup of coffee, were found in the galley. The ship's boats, to further confound matters, were still aboard, and to crown the riddle, the bunks still retained the warm impress of the crew members, *not one of whom was ever seen again*.

Now this mystery, in the course of its long career, has provided innocent diversion for a good many people. The theorist who managed to account for the abandoned breakfast was sure to trip over the slight marks of collision on the bow. The theorist who accounted for the boats was sure to come a cropper over that steaming cup of coffee. As time went on and the problem resisted every proffered solution, the *Mary Celeste* acquired the status of a maritime Mona Lisa, at once an enigma and a delight. And how does Captain Villiers succeed where so many have failed? By a process so simple that it hardly seems sporting; he simply looked up the records of the Admiralty Court's inquiry into the matter and discovered that the mystery never really existed at all. The *Mary Celeste*, it seems, was *not* in perfect order when she was found, nor under full sail. Indeed, there was water in the hold and much of the rigging was damaged. The interrupted breakfast and the warm bunks were fictions, and, in fact, all the evidence pointed to the ship's having been abandoned some nine days before she was discovered. And, although Captain Villiers insists that "the facts of themselves are startling enough," it is evident that the enchantment is gone; any intelligent child could work out a plausible explanation of the recorded circumstances.

But if Captain Villiers has solved one mystery, he has created another. For even in its palmiest days, the mystery of the *Mary Celeste* could not compare to the recent, well-publicized appearance of Captain Villiers himself off the coast of New England. Here is mystery indeed. What could induce a grown man to dress up in a Pilgrim suit and sail a copy of the *Mayflower* all the way across the Atlantic from England? Captain Villiers cannot claim, as could the leader of the Kon-Tiki expedition, that he is attempting to prove the trip possible.

Nor can he argue that he only wishes to take part in the anniversary celebration of the landing at Provincetown. Who ever heard of a 337th anniversary celebration? However much one may feel like throwing a party, it is customary to delay these affairs until a nice round number of years has been achieved. What, then, is the captain up to? Does he really believe, as he stated in *Wild Ocean*, that the voyage of the *Mayflower II* will serve as "a more or less permanent expression of British good will to the people of the United States of America"? If so, he reckoned without the citizens of Virginia, many of whom are thoroughly incensed at what they consider a calculated attempt to steal thunder from their 350th anniversary celebration of the founding of Jamestown.

THE captain's own behavior has added to the mystery. A reporter who sought to question him by radio-telephone while the *Mayflower II* was still at sea, found it almost impossible to extract a plain answer to the simplest questions. Queried as to whether he carried any bourbon aboard, Captain Villiers immediately began to back and fill: "Bourbon—never heard of that. What's that stuff?" Anxiety over the approaching Customs inspection might explain this pretense of ignorance but it could hardly explain his reply to a question about women. "Women," he repeated ingenuously, "what's that?" And surely, even after 54 days at sea, he ought to know. A simple request for his age also met with resistance. "I'll tell you," he said evasively, "when we get in." It is hard to avoid the suspicion that Captain Villiers is determined to keep the world in ignorance of these matters until he gets a chance to put them into another book.

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ART

The Missing Link

THE large Hans Hofmann exhibition which has just embarked on a two-year national tour meets a need among art-interested people throughout the country. Hofmann's work provides a welcome missing link between the conventional abstract art of this century and the looser and larger paintings of the last decade that are called abstract-expressionist. That Hofmann's work should provide such a link is not surprising. Now 77, he has been in art since the turn of the century, in Paris, in Munich and, since the early thirties, in America. Hofmann's school—winters in New York, summers on Cape Cod—is the most famous one-man show of art instruction anywhere. From it have come many of the abstract-expressionists and one might reasonably hope to see in the master's work the principles the students have applied each in his own way.

As an exhibiting artist, Hofmann's own career is a curious one and its curious nature is evident in the show which has just left the Whitney Museum in New York. The earliest painting on view is a self-portrait of 1902 done in a kind of soft focus pointellism. Chronologically the next painting is from 1935 and the show proceeds from there with something over half of the paintings dating from the fifties. This gap is partly explained by the circumstances of German artists in our time. Hofmann abandoned his work in Paris to return home at the beginning of World War I. And he left another collection in Munich when the shadow of the Nazi gunmen rose over that city. Even so it is a curious record: a one-man show in Berlin in 1910, a one-man show of drawings in California in 1931, nothing in between.

The answer, of course, is that until quite recently Hofmann operated primarily as a teacher rather than as an artist. For all the excesses of some of his star pupils Hofmann's painting is very teacherly work. Every one of the typical paintings, whatever else it may be doing, is also providing an example for the student painter. The emphasis is on composition in paint; drawing, which continued its historic role as painting's armature through most of the varieties of 20th Century art, is pretty well jettisoned as the Hofmann style reaches its present form. What looks like line in the late work is usually not the defining edge of plane or form but a full fledged compositional element often endowed with the actual three dimensions of paint that is one of the distinguishing notes of Hofmann and his children.

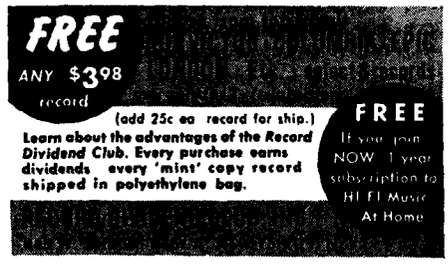
THE theory of painting manifest in Hofmann's work is neither difficult nor particularly novel, despite his invention of new and dramatic terms—notably "push and pull"—to describe it. Stated as simply as possible. Hofmann's paintings insist on composition as the point of painting. Yesterday's young ladies who learned, as part of their finishing, to regard cinquecento nativities and nudes as exercises in geometry should have no trouble finding their way around a Hofmann. There are two main differences. Subject has vanished, but then the triangle school of art appreciation for gentlemen's daughters always seemed to regret the thighs and theology that so got in the way of the movements and their meanings. The great difference is the use of paint as a distinct element so as to preserve both its material and its manner of application. Hofmann isolates and coarsens individual brush strokes and uses them as forms and planes have always been used in composition. Thus in one of the really stunning works in this show, "Orchestral Dominance in Yellow" the background is divided into rectangles of orange, green and purple all relatively flat. Upon this ground dances a spirited collection of individual paint smears in blue, green, red, etc., some of them mixed with white, some of them quite pure. The smear structure takes off from the bottom of the painting and describes an eccentric spiral off from which, as if centrifugally hurled, are smears in yellow, pink and green. Thus the paint itself and the manner of its application provide the relationships of color, form and texture.

The missing 30 years in Hofmann's development have presented no serious obstacle to relating him to the main stream of modern painting. The Fauves are mentioned most often with their arbitrary color and textured paint cited as hereditary characteristics. Fauve color is actually rather dim compared to Hofmann's and their texturing of paint is almost always the same as Vincent Van Gogh's: It was used for the delineation of objects almost as if it were the paint translation of the engraver's lines for volumn, modeling and shadow.

A closer relationship is that with the formally non-objective painting of Kandinsky and Bauer—what could have been called, until the advent of James Johnson Sweeney as director, the Guggenheim school. When Hilla Rebay was running the Guggenheim, she used to solicit and publish testimonials from visitors on the beneficial effects of the paintings. The movement appeared as a kind of joy-through-art therapy. The theory was that the soul could be uplifted through the visual contemplation of colors and shapes and that the chief painters on view had put the process on a scientific basis. Hofmann's paintings attempt much the same thing, as the titles testify: "Scintillating Space," "Lyric Mood," "Exuberance," "Burst Into Life," "Ecstasy," and "Delight." They succeed too. Joy is the theme. The immediate impression of almost any of his late pieces is of the unfettered human soul flinging paint gaily about. The reason it works, however, is that the gaity of the fling is subject to close compositional control. Some of his students and admirers have picked up the thickness of the paint and the obvious importance of the act of painting, over-emphasized the accidental element inherent in thick paint and given up composition entirely. The result has been yard-goods.

THE SHOW is opening in Des Moines for the summer, whence it goes to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Minneapolis, Utica and Baltimore.

FRANK GETLEIN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RECORDS

The Off-Beat Repertory

LONG PLAYING RECORDS have been going around for ten years now, and three distinct patterns are emerging in the repertory represented on them.

First, it is clear that the standard repertory, as it has been listed in a generation of so-called music appreciation courses, is not being changed by record manufacturers. The flood of Beethoven, Tschaikowsky, and Brahms is, and apparently will continue, unabated. Within this framework, certain distinguished releases are outstanding. Among them are the Beethoven symphonies on Angel records, as done by Otto Klemperer and the Philharmonia Orchestra of London. These, together with Sir Thomas Beecham's recent recording of Mozart's *Seraglio* set standards of which Angel, with one of the highest artistic caliber catalogs in the business, can be especially proud.

But on either end of the standard repertory, two steady trends have solidified into exciting areas in any record collectors' library: music of the great pre-Bach era, and the world of truly contemporary music, notably American music of the last 20 years. Foremost among the well planned and executed releases of music from the early days of Gregorian chant up to the 18th Century is the series known as the Archive Production, released in this country by Decca Records.

Never before have records come more perfectly engineered, or so fully and rightly annotated. For example, in the great recording of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, we are given full data on the place of recording, the technical supervisor, and the producer and even details about the textual edition used.

The essential part of the recording, the realization of Monteverdi's score, is no less clearly indicated, in the complete listing of each instrument in the orchestra, its maker's name and the identity of each player. Thus we are not surprised to hear a realization of Monteverdi's magnificent score that fully reveals its Baroque richness. The performers in these great recordings are chosen for their special gifts in each area of music, and we are at the opposite end of the world from records made by big-name artists who record everything written for their instrument whether or not they are temperamentally suited to it.

Other companies are doing distinguished work in the fields of pre-18th Century music, too, as in the case of the sumptuous looking and sounding sets of classic *concerti grossi* by Locatelli, Manfredini, Corelli and others, issued by VOX.

The third, and in some ways the most exciting area of vast development in recent record years, is that inhabited by the American composer, and to a startling degree, the young American composer. If this busy and gifted man is not overwhelmed by performances in the halls that house our symphony orchestras, is doing better than ever before on records.

Thanks for this situation goes to several places: to Columbia, for its Modern American Music Series; to Epic for its recently inaugurated policy of recording works commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation; to the Louisville Orchestra for its unique records of music commissioned by, and premiered by that most foresighted of American orchestras; and of course, to Howard Hanson and Mercury for their steady stream of invaluable records on which, more and more, a broad survey of the entire American orchestral repertory is being made permanent.

The Hanson-Eastman-Rochester collaboration on Mercury labels has given us items of special value lately, thanks to Hanson's insistence on representing many aspects of the newer American orchestral output. Thus we have a brilliant orchestral score called "The Masks" by 24-year-old Ronald Lo Presti; Alan Hovhaness's "Arevakal" Concerto for Orchestra, and his Prelude and Quadruple Fugue — works in which something of Hovhaness' dual interests in music are clearly illuminated; and music of unusual stimulating power by Elliott Carter, Roger Sessions, Colin McPhee, and a dozen more.

From these sources, chiefly, are coming the new sounds and ideas in music that may or may not prove lasting and valid in the growth of music, but without which our pretensions to a living musical culture are pretty empty affairs.

The Epic-Fromm records are already enriched by Lou Harrison's Mass, a String Quartet by Ilhan Usmanbas, and the Second Quartet of William Denny. This same series also gives you a chance to hear Leon Kirchner's Piano Trio, which shows an individuality and integrity of arresting stature, in a medium that has not been used with such strength in over a century.

COLUMBIA'S catalog of contemporary American music, one of the earliest and most progressive, does not keep that company from issuing other unusual albums. Latest of these is the set embracing the complete works of Anton Webern, which I commend most insistently. From the *Passacaglia,* Opus 1, through the fascinating *Canons on Latin Texts,* to the two astounding cantatas, and including those other dozen of works, the longest of which is less than twelve minutes, this is a study in absolute mastery of form, and a succession of sonorities not to be heard elsewhere; music to be possessed by those who prize the Berg Violin Concerto, or *Wozzeck.*

PAUL HUME

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Notes on Contributors

VICTOR LANGE is a professor of German at Cornell University. GERALD WEALES is the author of a recently-published book for children, *Miss Grimsby is a Witch.* FRANK GETLEIN writes regularly on art for this journal. PAUL HUME, our guest record reviewer, is Music Critic of *The Washington Post.*

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Correspondence

(*Continued from page 3*)

article by Philip Roth is a fatuous piece of boorishness, and in wretched taste. Our democratic society is healthier because the acts of public officials are subject to public comment and criticism, even to the extent of scorn and ridicule, but it is certainly no better off because of this prying into Mr. Eisenhower's prayers. I suggest that Mr. Roth and your staff go home and say theirs, incorporating a statement to the effect that you too muffed one.

JAMES F. BAILEY

River Forest, Illinois

► *Educating the Gifted Child*

SIRS:

THE validity of Professor Bestor's criticism of the education of gifted children in the US ("Educating the Gifted Child," *NR*, March 4) strikes one more forcefully when one sees the superior treatment such students get in another country, as we are now seeing during a year's stay in Australia. There is no doubt that our two children attending the state high school in Canberra are getting a more advanced, more versatile and stimulating education here, even though they were making high grades in schools which were rated highly in California and in the US.

I am convinced that a major factor in the superiority here is the separation of students into classes according to their demonstrable abilities, permitting whole classes to proceed at their own speeds, and a more efficient selection of teachers to meet the needs of a whole class. The abler of the 11-12 year olds, who enter high school after six primary grades, study two languages (Latin and French), English, science, mathematics (including algebra and beginning geometry), history and geography, plus some extras (music, manual arts, athletics), and they do this without any difficulty. This, of course, is not the "enrichment," by padding on more time-consuming stuff which does not challenge the student with new concepts, that Bestor castigates. There are of course problems attached to the grouping of students, including that of maintaining proper fluidity of placement to correct errors; choice of criteria for selection of students; etc. But these problems are by no means insoluble.

I do not agree with all of Bestor's criticisms, nor do I agree with many of his recommendations for correcting them. But the problem of inadequate education for the abler students (say the upper 10 to 20 percent, not merely the exceptionally gifted ones) is a very real one, and it should not be brushed aside by those educationists who feel Bestor has attacked them unjustly. Nolan C. Kearney's statement (in his March 25 reply to Dr. Bestor) that "equality of treatment in our curriculum is there because the parents and other citizens want it there (and this is rightly so)," illustrates one of the basic fallacies that Bestor rightly attacks. This is a distortion of democracy in which the rights of the minority are to be suppressed, with no gain to the majority. In my view, democracy holds that every child be given an *equal opportunity* to develop maximally according to *his own* abilities and interests; it does not hold that all must be treated uniformly.

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The New Republic *welcomes communications from its readers in regard to subjects of current interest. Those of 300 words or less lend themselves to publication more readily than longer letters.*

► *Milton for the Miltonists*

SIRS:

ROBERT GRAVES, identified as "novelist, classicist and anthropologist," will not likely, on the strength of his "John Milton Muddles Through" (*NR*, May 27), ever be termed a "Miltonist."

Indeed, one would suspect Mr. Graves of a long standing and indurated malevolence toward the greatest of English poets. His relentless dissection of *L'Allegro* is certainly without parallel in modern Miltonic criticism.

Mr. Graves, in his "Diseases of Scholarship" (*NR*, May 6; May 20), gave to *NR* readers an unusually engaging and perceptive study of such diverse maladies as "creeping pedagogitis," "political siopesis" and "academic xenophobia." Is it too much to hope that Mr. Graves, hereafter, will leave Milton to the Miltonists and treat, instead, those generalized aspects of scholarship wherein his charm and invention cannot be disputed?

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Gilbert A. Harrison, EDITOR & PUBLISHER

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